

GOP Doctors Talk Health Care on the House Floor

Washington, D.C. – Members of the House GOP Doctors Caucus took to the floor this morning to talk about the Democrats' health care proposal and its affect on their patients. In the coming weeks, Republican members of Congress with healthcare backgrounds will begin each morning with speeches on the need for real healthcare reforms and how current proposals will affect patients. Excerpts from the floor are as follows:

House GOP Doctors Caucus Co-Chair

Dr. Phil Gingrey (GA-11): "Health care reform should not cost my patients their health care. In every plan, the Democrats plan to pay for healthcare reform on the backs of my patients, particularly seniors and those who get health care from their employer; despite our tough economic times, the Democrat plans would fund their health reform plans by creating massive new taxes on employers that will result in as many as 5.5 million lost jobs. Don't believe me? Ask the 22 Democrats who signed a letter to Speaker Pelosi on July 16th, telling her that the Obama plan could increase small business taxes by 50 percent."

Dr. John Boozman (AR-03): "In January 2008, the Arkansas Department of Health reported that 51, 707 Arkansans were currently enrolled in Medicare Advantage; I will not support legislation that sacrifices the health of seniors in Arkansas by cutting Medicare Advantage."

Dr. Michael Burgess (TX-26): "Republicans have real solutions for meaningful health care reform, and our ideas would not cost many of America's patients the care they have and like. Real health care reform includes medical liability reform like Texas passed in 2003, which allows more doctors to practice medicine and leaves medical decisions to doctors and patients. Reform should not cut benefits for the seniors on Medicare Advantage or require struggling states to bear the cost burden of adding millions more Americans to Medicaid. Republicans believe portability is the way to provide more choices to Americans, and reject the notion that adding a 'public option' is the way to create choice and competition. Health care reform should not cost America's patients their health care, and Republican doctors have ideas as to how real health care reform should look."

Dr. John Fleming (LA-04): "The Democrat health care reform proposals being circulated in Congress right now are bad for American families, bad for American seniors and bad for American small businesses. If we allow a government takeover of health care, a \$544 billion surtax is going to be imposed on the so-called rich to pay for this awful plan," said U.S. Representative John Fleming (LA-04). "The result of these new taxes on jobs will be the loss of an estimated 5.5 million jobs. Why are Democrats pushing a government takeover of health care that will cripple small businesses and make unemployment rates even worse?"

Dr. Phil Roe (TN-01): "On Tuesday, the Washington Post published a poll supposedly showing that 57 percent of Americans support quote 'having the government create a new health insurance plan to compete with private health insurance plans.' Unfortunately, what the Post failed to ask and what poll after poll has shown consistently is that Americans who claim to support a government-run option switch their opinion when they find out that creating such a plan will decrease quality and access and increase costs."

“How do I know this will happen? I practiced as an OB-GYN under a plan very similar to what Democrats are proposing here. We sought to increase access to health insurance by lowering provider payments and promising free medical care on our state’s government-run Medicaid plan. Our plan was called TennCare, but it might as well have been H.R. 3200. It resulted in costs tripling in less than ten years and rationing of care when our state couldn’t pay for the care was promised. As businesses realized they could shift costs to the public sector, our state saw 45 percent of the individuals on TennCare had previously been on private health insurance. It was a disaster, and I’m trying to prevent the same disaster from playing out on a national level.”

Members of the House GOP Doctors Caucus include Congressmen Phil Gingrey (R-GA), Tim Murphy (R-PA), John Boozman (R-AR), Michael Burgess (R-TX), Charles Boustany (R-LA), Paul Broun (R-GA), Bill Cassidy (R-LA), John Fleming (R-LA), John Linder (R-GA), Ron Paul (R-TX), Tom Price (R-GA), Phil Roe (R-TN), and Mike Simpson (R-ID).